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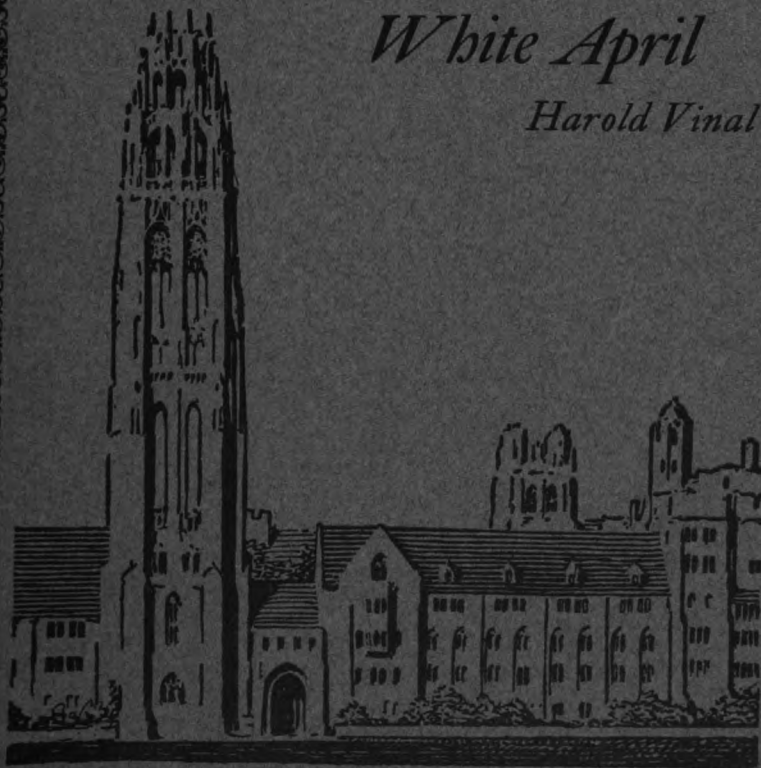




THE YALE SERIES

*White April*

*Harold Vinal*

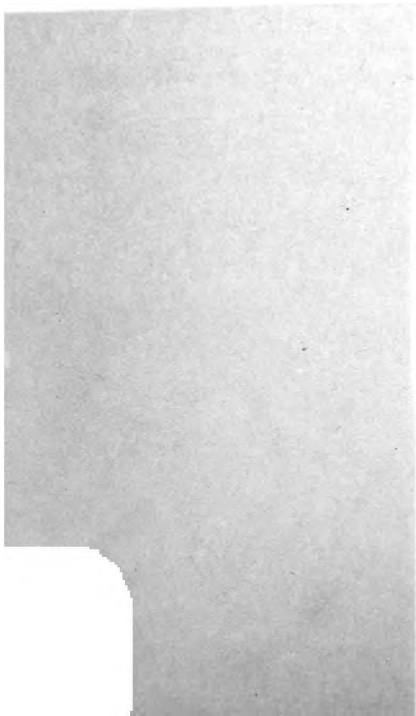


OF YOUNGER POETS









To William Stanley Rutherford  
with Much Appreciation  
Harold Vinal

March 1922

### *Farm Boy*

This lad knows fields as well as any-  
one,  
The spear of young grass lifting by a  
rill,  
And arrowing bird above a sunny  
hill,  
Tells him unflinching March has  
begun.  
This lad has eyes for furrows in the  
rain,  
And tinge of keen earth in the days of  
Spring,  
When buds swell and wind begins to  
sing,  
Then he must whistle back to it again.  
They who are born on farms they  
know the way  
Black trains spin through a valley at  
twilight,  
The sound of loose carts rattling home  
at night,  
Though nothing hold them still they  
want to stay  
Close to the earth they love and  
seldom go  
Beyond the wave mark left, by the last  
snow.  
—Harold Vinal, in The Forum





## PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

THE *Yale Series of Younger Poets* is designed to afford a publishing medium for the work of young men and women who have not yet secured a wide public recognition. It will include only such verse as seems to give the fairest promise for the future of American poetry,—to the development of which it is hoped that the Series may prove a stimulus. Communications concerning manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor, Professor Charlton M. Lewis, 425 St. Ronan Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

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#### EARLY PUBLICATION

- I. THE TEMPERING. *By Howard Buck.*
- II. FORGOTTEN SHRINES. *By John Chipman Farrar.*
- III. FOUR GARDENS. *By David Osborne Hamilton.*
- IV. SPIRES AND POPLARS. *By Alfred Raymond Bellinger.*
- V. THE WHITE GOD AND OTHER POEMS. *By Thomas Caldecot Chubb.*
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- X. THE GOLDEN DARKNESS. *By Oscar Williams.*
- XI. WHITE APRIL. *By Harold Vinal.*
- XII. DREAMS AND A SWORD. *By Medora C. Addison.*



White April



HAROLD VINAL



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**TO MOTHER**





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**PART I.**  
**GOLDEN WINDOWS.**





**MY OWN.**

**O** I must answer to a name  
And live upon a certain street,  
And stairs within a dingy house  
Must bear the burden of my feet.

Still, when the night is dim and sweet,  
In dreams I roam the silent hills,  
Where aisles of shadow, vague with light,  
Are petalled soft with daffodils.

I foot it through the silver dark,  
I shout aloud to field and tree  
And all this gipsy heart of me  
Is longing, longing to be free.

**O** I must answer to a name  
And live upon a certain street,  
But who shall take my dreams from me  
Or keep my life from being sweet ?

CANDLE.

I WILL light my candle  
Before night comes on,  
A room is a dreary place  
And forlorn.

I will light the tiny flame  
So it sputter brightly,  
For ghosts of lonely things  
Trouble me nightly.

I will shut my ears  
Lest I hear again  
Wind crying in the hall,  
Rain on the pane.

I will light my candle  
Before night comes on,  
A room is a dreary place—  
Now love has gone.

**TO PERSEPHONE.**

**N**o more you weave, Persephone,  
Gowns the colors of the sea.

Your ivory fingers now are still  
And your grave a grassy hill.

But everywhere songs are sung  
They sing of you who died so young.

And lads and lassies passing by  
Place bergamot where you lie.

No more you weave, Persephone,  
Gowns the colors of the sea,

Emerald, chrysoprase and blue  
That looked beautiful on you.

But everywhere songs are sung  
They sing of you who died so young.

## WINDOW.

**F**ROM my window I see  
Tall trees in a row,  
Rhododendron and phlox,  
Spicy things that blow.

All of beauty there  
Through four little panes,  
Clumps of columbine  
Wet with the rains.

Through my window I see  
Life pass by me—  
Colin and Christopher,  
Rose and Charity.

## TOKENS.

**I**N memory of this and that  
I'll wear a starry hood  
And set a bowl upon the stoop  
And light the wood.

In memory of laughter  
I'll dance no more  
But hide my gown and feathers  
Behind a dark door.

In memory of sorrow  
I'll take them out again  
And put a ribbon in my hair  
And dance down a lane.

## **FORGOTTEN.**

**H**ow can I remember  
Autumn and pain,  
When trees hold dreams  
In their arms again ?

How can my heart break  
Till it cries ?  
The joy of summer  
Has made me wise.

I can't remember  
What hurt me so—  
Autumn and winter  
Were so long ago.

## **QUERY.**

**I** AM bound by twilight,  
I am chained by snow,  
I am held a captive  
To the winds that blow.

But the careless people  
Laugh as they go by  
Blind to all the wonder  
Of the earth and sky ;

Deaf to all the music  
Falling over me ;  
Is it they are captive—  
And that I am free ?

### DEBORAH SPEAKS.

**T**HE candles I keep burning  
Above the door  
Are in memory of those  
Who pass no more.

Faith and Caroline,  
Rose and Margaret,  
I light candles there  
Lest the heart forget.

I keep candles flaming  
Lest, when Strephon call,  
I forget that they  
Ever lived at all.

### LESBIA SEWING.

**S**TITCHES over and over  
So the heart won't break,  
Thrust the needle under  
For sorrow's sake.

Stitches over and over  
Till the pattern's set,  
Thrust the needle under  
So the heart forget.

Stitches over and over,  
Needle hurry fast,  
Till the love of beauty  
Fall from me at last.

**PART II.**  
**SONNETS FOR WEEPING.**





## LATE AND SOON.

I AM so near to grief I needs must weep  
For little places fair as Camelot,  
For dusty inns and gardens long forgot,  
They haunt me ever so I cannot sleep.  
I am the slave of beauty late and soon,  
Of apricots blown into silver rain,  
Held close to tears by many a shining lane  
Where ghostly birds call wildly to the moon.  
Is there at last an ending to it all,  
An end of petals blown against my face,  
Can I not hide myself behind a wall  
And forget beauty for a little space,  
Forget all passion that I ever knew—  
Old beauty gone and you and you and you ?

## INVOCATION.

I THOUGHT that beauty was forever dead,  
Until I saw a daffodil abloom  
And two bright tulips in my garden bed  
And silver spills beyond my little room.  
I thought that grief would never go from me,  
Yet now how wonderful are all the days,  
I am no longer hurt by misery  
But wild with joy and tremulous with praise.  
O God, let not too many white stars fall,  
Nor let your bushes bloom in one small hour,  
I could not bear the beauty of it all,  
For I would pause with awe before each flower  
And touch each blossom with my finger-tips  
And feel the wind's first sweetness on my lips.

### EARTH LOVER.

**O**LD loveliness has such a way with me,  
That I am close to tears when petals fall  
And needs must hide my face against a wall,  
When autumn trees burn red with ecstasy.  
For I am haunted by a hundred things  
And more that I have seen in April days;  
I have held stars above my head in praise,  
I have worn beauty as two costly rings.  
Alas, how short a state does beauty keep,  
Then let me clasp it wildly to my heart  
And hurt myself until I am a part  
Of all its rapture, then turn back to sleep,  
Remembering through all the dusty years  
What sudden wonder brought me close to tears.

### AFTER DUSK.

**B**y day no singing beauty wakes in me;  
My soul is silent as a silver dell,  
Where voiceless winds speak only of farewell  
And cloistered flowers dwell in secrecy.  
Shaken with woe I hide against my heart  
Sweetness and loveliness and meadowed rain  
And swallow-beauty May has brought again;  
Dream-still they lie alone, untouched, apart.  
But when day undesired falls asleep,  
Dreaming on hills where shaking stars look down,  
I roam cool-misted vales beyond the town,  
And cry my love of beauty till I weep.  
The glowing trees, so faint that no one hears,  
Drop veils of shadow down to hide my tears.

## YEAR'S ENDING.

O I could weep my heart out, late and soon,  
For dear and lovely things I would forget:  
A blur of silver spills that burned at noon,  
A clump of daffodils and mignonette,  
Aprils remembered that come back no more  
To haunt my gardens where the tulips bloom  
And banished summers flaming at my door,  
When haunted moonlight streamed into my room.  
At times the thought of so much loveliness  
Drops from me strangely, like the end of grief,  
Then suddenly I feel the wind's caress,  
Or a wild tree lets fall a lyric leaf.  
The thought of you drifts from an ancient spring—  
And I near weep again remembering.

## AUTUMN AFTERNOON.

OLD loveliness returned this afternoon  
To break my heart and make me weep aloud;  
I had forgotten autumn came so soon,  
With blur of golden leaf and jewelled cloud.  
Here once wild, scarlet tulips used to blow  
And daffodils wave lightly in the spring  
And lovely spicewood bushes burn and glow  
And April trees spill April blossoming.  
Now the last birds go winging down the air  
And children's laughter and a scrap of song  
Blown from a shivering pipe; Nothing lasts long,  
Not even April that was once so fair.  
O how it hurts to see the wild trees thinned  
And spring's dear beauty falling in the wind.

### EVANESCENCE.

**S**LOWLY I pass among the blowing flowers  
Catching my breath at their beauty as I go;  
Familiar sweetness drifts across the hours,  
Keen, lovely sweetness, intimate as woe.  
Yet by to-morrow all the roses blown  
Will be a sea of crimson on the grass,  
And the naked trees will shudder at the moan  
Of glowing winds that wake them as they pass.  
In such wise, love will vanish as the night,  
Each word of joy that you have sung to me  
The years will silence with their dark delight,  
And the wild soaring after ecstasy  
Will be a lyric bird that dares the sky—  
Only to fall to earth when storms beat by.

### PITY.

**O** do not pity me because I gave  
My heart when lovely April with a gust  
Swept down the singing lanes like a cool wave,  
And do not pity me because I thrust  
Aside your love that once burned as a flame;  
I was as thirsty as a windy flower  
That bares its bosom to the summer shower  
And to the unremembered winds that came.  
Pity me most for moments yet to be  
In the far years, when some day I shall turn  
Toward this strong path up to our little door  
And find it barred to all my ecstasy.  
No sound of your warm voice the winds have borne—  
Only the crying sea upon the shore.

## EARTH MEMORY.

**T**HE earth remembers many an April blown  
To lyric beauty on a lovely hill,  
And many a golden hour she has known  
Comes back to haunt her with old wonder still.  
The earth remembers things she knew of yore,  
Summers that olden lovers have forgot,  
The way of silver rain upon a shore  
And little towns as fair as Camelot.  
The earth has moon-kissed beauty and to spare,  
While I weep long for love, a thing as frail  
As blue spills blown high in a sudden gale,  
The space of weeping is too great to bear;  
Blow by a whirl of petalled blossoming—  
So I forget to weep with wondering.



**PART III.  
OF MARINERS.**





## SEA LONGING.

**Y**ou who are inland born know not the pain  
Of one who longs for grey dunes and the seas  
And sound of ebbing tide and windy rain  
And sea-mews crying down immensities.  
You who are inland born know not the urge  
Of rapt tides beating passionate and wild,  
Nor have you thrilled with wonder at the surge  
Of drifting water, wayward as a child.  
Impetuous I seek the eager sea,  
Imperious for joy and wind-blown spray;  
You, who are city beaten every day,  
What do you know of mirth and ecstasy?  
No thirsty wind has journeyed from the South—  
And laid a cool, wet finger on your mouth!

## EXILED.

**I** WILL remember to the very last  
The look of ships upon a quiet sea,  
Each windy sail, each spar and slender mast  
Must linger ever in my memory.  
I will remember hills and harbor ways  
And bright lagoons, though I long to forget;  
Enchanted islands green as chrysoprase  
And lonely nights of rose and violet.  
Men who have known such splendid things as these  
Can never quite forget what they have learned;  
Their thoughts must always be of secret seas  
Or of dim places where the moonlight burned.  
Always the sound of wind moans in their ears  
Or rush of waters under ghostly piers.

## OF MARINERS.

**Y**ou who have known the changes of the sea  
And marked the tides and watched each wistful star;  
You who have known old ships, each mast and spar,  
Can only know what such things mean to me.  
You who have known the quiet mystery  
Of lovely islands in a glowing bay,  
Know what it is that haunts me night and day—  
A ghost of things that will not let me be.  
For they who know such things must always dream  
Of wind and tide and barques that they have known,  
Old schooners lying where the town lights gleam,  
A tall ship sailing by at dawn alone.  
They who have felt the wind upon their lips,  
Their speech must always be of sea or ships.

## OLD SHIPS.

**W**HAT memories hang round about the spars  
Of splendid ships that come to port no more,  
What dreams of moonlit seas and lovely stars,  
What sound of waters on a wooden floor.  
Something remembered from an ancient day  
Comes back to haunt them when the evening falls,  
The cry of gleaming birds from far away,  
The moan of winds around their whitened walls.  
Something survives to make them wistful still  
Of silver harbors that they knew of yore,  
Of midnight quiet by a secret hill,  
Of shining lights upon a singing shore.  
Perchance, a ghostly gull against the sky  
Or a white sail at twilight flashing by.

### LITTLE SONG.

**P**UT a fence about my house  
It matters not to me,  
If from the highest window  
I cannot watch the sea.

Scent the rooms with flowers,  
You may leave them bare  
If no salty sea wind  
Wanders there.

Leave tall candles burning,  
A house can be a grave—  
If it's far from water  
And a breaking wave.

### THE SEA REMEMBERS.

**T**HE sea remembers things she knew of yore,  
Ships that have flowered on her lovely breast  
And secret islands, silvered by a shore,  
The cry of winds that mocked her with a jest.  
Remembered beauty comes to haunt her still,  
A ghostly sail blown by at evenfall,  
A singing bird above a starry hill—  
In haunted hours she remembers all.  
She cannot quite forget these wistful things,  
Barges that were her lovers in old days  
And golden argosies with lifted wings,  
And splendid schooners that sailed down her bays.  
Always she dreams of masts and wooden spars  
Or a tall ship that passed beneath the stars.

## RUMORS.

**T**HERE is a rumor when each ship returns  
Of ghostly harbors that it touched at dawn,  
Of blue lagoons where lifted beauty burns,  
Shore lines towards which its wooden spars have gone.  
There is a rumor of disastrous days  
And nights by quiet islands near a town,  
Of wine-red hills, beyond the waterways  
Where both the moon and lovely stars looked down.  
Now do they dream beneath the April sky  
Of olden time and golden circumstance,  
Of ancient summers, ended like a dance,  
And mad adventures, now a memory.  
A secret flower lying on their breast  
The wind dropped down upon an old, old quest.

## LET ME LIE.

**L**ET me lie in an unremembered place  
With sorrel red about me and currants swaying;  
Let the cool darkness fall upon my face—  
I only want to hear waves playing.

I only ask this thing, sound of the sea,  
Clean water shifting under a granite ledge,  
Spindrift flying wildly by a tree,  
The sound of the wind among the sedge.

Life must go on, to-morrow and to-morrow,  
Night following night and day following day;  
Give me the one thing, Life, that I desire—  
The sound of wheeling gulls and waves at play.

**PART IV.**  
**WHITE GLAMOUR.**



### YOU CAME TO ME.

**Y**ou came to me with darkness as a lute  
On which you played strange melodies to woo me,  
You came with cymbals and wild timbrelling—  
With golden harmonies did you pursue me.

Upon a pipe of lovely shivering reeds,  
You strung your arabesques like filigrees;  
The notes were kisses blown to touch my lips  
As warm as rain upon pomegranate trees.

You came to me with darkness as a lute,  
A twirl of tears to woo me and your eyes;  
You brought me death and beauty, I was mute—  
Now do I hunger for you, O most wise.

### THE HOUSE OF DUST.

**W**HEN this, our love, at last is buried low  
Beneath the flaming streets of a dark city  
And other hearts forget to scoff and pity  
Our lovely dream that burned as deep as woe,  
We shall arise again and gladly turn  
Down these far dew-drenched vales we tread to-day  
And wander where the rain-kissed boughs of May  
Shed streaming perfume over starry fern.  
No one will see or guess that we are there,  
Who spoke their last farewell above our dust,  
When our hushed voices ended all surprise,  
And bitter silence for a moment thrust  
Dead waves across your beauty burning fair  
And petalled flowers over your sweet eyes.

### THE NIGHTS REMEMBER.

**T**HE nights remember lovely things they knew,  
The words of lovers, tremulous and wise,  
And kisses blown and laughter and the beauty  
Of glowing eyes.

The nights remember hours white with wonder,  
Lipped with red stars and strangely luminous;  
Perchance, beloved, when the years have lengthened—  
They will remember us.

### UNBOUND.

**S**HELTER me from loving you  
Lest it grow too great to bear,  
Put a silence to my song  
Lest it sing you everywhere.

Let me be a common hour  
Or a careless word;  
Pluck me, as you would a flower,  
Cage me, as you would a bird.

For I praise you everywhere,  
Shout your wonder down the street;  
Bind me, so I may not dare  
Leave you, sweet.



### TALISMAN.

I SHALL remember you in years to be,  
As June's first rose or as a golden bough,  
And all this beauty that we gather now  
Will be a song or a dear memory.  
I shall remember you as mists that blow  
Across reluctant fields where no sounds are  
And grief's dark night will wear a splendid star  
Because of the enchanted things I know.  
The peace of all your preciousness will make  
Each hour of pain an hour of loveliness,  
For some remembered call or faint caress  
Will startle me and make my soul awake.  
So I forget that woe is terrible—  
Remembering that love is beautiful.

### LITTLE DEATH.

YOUR love died for me  
Like rain in a hollow,  
Suddenly there was no cry  
For me to follow.

All that was dear and sweet  
Last, last December,  
Now is a little poem  
You can't remember.

Your love died for me  
Like mist on a bough,  
Well, since I must forget—  
I will, somehow.

### ROSEMARY.

**F**OR the thought of you  
I'll wind up the clock,  
Sweep the floor  
And turn the lock.

For the thought of you  
I'll put on a gown,  
A ribbon or two  
And go to town.

For the thought of you  
I'll talk to strange folk  
And smile merrily—  
Though my heart's broke.

### MOONLIGHT MAGIC.

**M**OONLIGHT is magic when a day is gone  
For shivering silver hangs upon each flower ;  
Here where old lovers wandered once forlorn  
The trees are blown to beauty in an hour.  
Flowers and moonlight, these shall ever dwell  
A part of beauty on each secret hill,  
And whispered words that lovers dared not tell,  
Will be the birth of many a daffodil.  
Nor shall there be an ending to it all  
For always music shall drift down the air  
And shining petals tremble by a wall  
And olden loveliness pass unaware.  
We, who wear moonlight now like flower and grass,  
In later years will bring new things to pass.

## VISION.

**I** PUT my dream away,  
My dream of you ;  
A lonely little dream  
Of star and dew.

Now you can only see  
Wild April skies  
When you look deep into  
My sober eyes.

So sorrowfully sad  
Their look shall be—  
Your heart will never guess  
What made them see.

## SONG OF YOUNG LOVE.

**I** MADE my love a palanquin  
From wood of Lebanon,  
The seats were all of purple  
And ivory from the dawn,  
For she who was to ride it  
Was fair to look upon.

I made my love a palanquin,  
Inlaid with filigrees,  
The cushions were of river blue  
And color from the seas,  
And there were slaves to bear it  
Dark as pomegranate trees.

I made my love a palanquin,  
The ceiling overhead  
Was silver and wild olive  
And ebony and red—  
I did not dream that it would be  
A place for young love dead.



**PART V.  
OVERTONES.**



## BURIED.

**D**EEPER far than dead men lie  
Have I buried thoughts of you  
Underneath cool grasses  
And a night-green yew.

Never shall the starlings wake  
Things that lie so deep;  
Never shall the sunlight stir  
Thoughts asleep.

Deeper far than dead men lie,  
Shaded and withdrawn,  
I have buried thoughts of you  
From another dawn.

## GLIMPSES.

**I** SAW a star flame in the sky,  
I heard a wild bird sing  
And down where all the forest stirred  
Another answering.

All suddenly I felt the gleam  
That made my faith revive—  
Ah God, it takes such simple things  
To keep the soul alive.

### PASTORAL.

**T**HE air is thin and sweet  
With sounds I do not hear,  
Somewhere beauty blows  
As it does each year.

Somewhere laughter calls  
Down a country lane,  
But I hear the shriek  
Of a noisy train.

Somewhere lovers wait  
For maids undoubtedly,  
Wait for a word, a kiss,  
That belong to me.

### DEATH COMES.

**D**EATH comes in a night,  
All that we cherish,  
Beauty and laughter  
Soon perish.

Death comes in a day—  
House yourself well,  
Colin, Beatrice,  
Isobel.



## OLD THINGS.

**S**ONGS that I have loved  
Come back to me,  
One cannot forget a bird  
Or the crying sea.

Words that I have loved  
Give the heart no rest,  
Always they lie like flowers  
On the breast.

Faces I have loved,  
Eyes that gave no sign,  
Did the soul behind them  
Yearn as much as mine ?

## MUSIC TIDES.

**T**IDES of old music what do you sing  
Out in the darkness like a bird ?  
*Listen and I will tell to you*  
*The unspeakable word.*

Tides of old music what do you cry  
Out where the warm stars flame ?  
*Bend low and I will whisper you*  
*The unspeakable name.*

### SURETY.

**D**o not weep for her who lies  
In the silences,  
For she knew both youth and age  
And grew tired of these.

Do not weep for she was glad  
To share the quiet earth,  
Who grew weary of such things  
As joy and mirth.

Weep only for yourself  
Who pass unsatisfied—  
You have much to learn from her  
Who so gladly died.

### MISER.

**I** HAVE seen many things,  
Too beautiful for words;  
Twilights, tremulous with mist—  
Birds.

I have heard music  
That was to me  
Soft as the clinging fingers  
Of the sea.

I have known many things,  
Now I am old—  
I am a miser  
Counting my gold.



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